

RFTOP # 74**TITLE: NIGMS COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING**

A. POINT OF CONTACT NAME: Anthony Revenis

Proposal Address:
6011 Executive Blvd. Rm 529S
Rockville, MD 20892-7663

Billing Address:
Accounts Payable, OFM, NIH
Bldg 31, Room B1B39
Bethesda, MD 20892-2045

B. PROPOSED PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: The anticipated period of performance on this contract is five months from the date of award.

C. PRICING METHOD: Firm Fixed Price. Firms should provide a single price for the entire project. Firms are strongly encouraged to provide their best price with their initial proposal.

D. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS: Proposals should be submitted to the Point of Contact by e-mail. Please enter in the subject line the following text: "RFTOP #74 -- Proposal from [insert your firm name]." A signed task order form may be scanned and submitted or will be requested later from the successful bidder.

E. RESPONSE DUE DATE: Proposals are due no later than 10:00 PM EDT on August 8, 2002.

F. TASK DESCRIPTION:

Background

The National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) is a component of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) that supports basic, non-disease-targeted biomedical research and research training. This research increases understanding of life processes and lays the foundation for advances in disease diagnosis, treatment, and prevention.

NIGMS is organized into five divisions (Cell Biology and Biophysics; Genetics and Developmental Biology; Pharmacology, Physiology, and Biological Chemistry; Minority Opportunities in Research; and Extramural Activities), one center (Bioinformatics and Computational Biology), and five offices (Director, Administrative Management, Communications and Public Liaison, Program Analysis and Evaluation, and Scientific Review). In addition to supporting investigator-initiated research grants, research training, and minority programs, NIGMS has major initiatives in the areas of protein structure determination (the Protein Structure Initiative), pharmacogenetics, integrative and collaborative approaches to research ("glue grants"), and complex biological systems.

In fiscal year 2002, the Institute has a budget of over \$1.7 billion and a staff of approximately 179 employees. NIGMS is located in the Natcher Building on the main NIH campus at 45 Center Drive, Bethesda, Maryland.

The Office of Communications and Public Liaison (OCPL) communicates NIGMS goals, programs, and research advances to the general public and specific target audiences, both directly and via intermediaries, such as the news media. The office's information products include articles, news releases, programmatic and science education brochures, a newsletter on NIGMS minority programs, and the NIGMS World Wide Web site (<http://www.nigms.nih.gov/>).

The office also:

- advises the Director and other NIGMS staff members on communication matters and assists NIGMS staff in meeting their communication needs;
- assures compliance with NIH and HHS procedures for the review and clearance of public materials, including manuscripts, speeches, and publicly available electronic documents; and
- serves as the contact point for members of the public who wish to communicate with NIGMS staff and facilitates collaborative relationships between NIGMS and the many publics it serves.

The OCPL has six full-time staff members and has contracts for science writing, editing, HTML coding, Web site design, publication storage and distribution, and graphic design services.

The office has produced award-winning print materials and is viewed within NIGMS as being successful and effective. OCPL staff members want independent, outside recommendations to augment their own planning for future activities and directions.

Scope of Work

The NIGMS OCPL requires a contractor to advise it on plans for future activities that will maximize the office's impact and effectiveness. One major goal of the planning process is to identify ways for the OCPL (and NIGMS as a whole) to establish or strengthen partnerships with outside organizations, enhance existing connections with various publics, and build new bridges with targeted groups. The size and composition of the OCPL staff are not expected to change significantly, so the contractor's recommendations must be realistic for the size and skills of the existing staff. The contractor may suggest areas for staff training and opportunities for using additional contractors to perform projects or augment skills available within the office.

The contractor shall gather information on OCPL's current activities and products through interviews with OCPL staff as well as other NIGMS staff who use OCPL services, including NIGMS senior management staff. The contractor may also seek input on OCPL's activities and products from outside sources, who may include staff of scientific societies, science teachers, news reporters, and scientists who receive grant funds from NIGMS. A maximum of nine outside sources (non-Federal employees) may be contacted for this purpose.

As part of their proposals, offerors shall submit a plan that outlines how they would execute this project. The plan shall include key steps, with a brief description and rationale for each, and a timeline for completing the project within five months of the contract award. The plan will be assessed by NIGMS based on the extent to which it is likely to produce useful, realistic, and comprehensive results.

The contractor shall meet with the Project Officer within one week of the contract award and shall be in contact with the Project Officer during the contract period via e-mail, telephone, or in person. Either the Project Officer or the contractor may determine that such contact is needed.

The contractor shall submit any study designs and instruments it develops in the course of this contract to the Project Officer for approval prior to implementation. The contractor shall also submit information to the Project Officer on the type of job and organization represented by proposed interview subjects. The contractor shall obtain approval from the Project Officer before contacting these individuals. To promote honest feedback and preserve the privacy of interview subjects, the contractor shall not identify individuals as the sources of specific comments that are included in the final report.

The contractor shall provide all necessary personnel, supplies, equipment, and services to perform the task work.

Deliverables/Delivery Schedule

1. The contractor shall prepare brief monthly reports describing the work done during that period, the tasks to be completed during the next period, and any issues or questions that have arisen. The report shall also detail funds spent and funds remaining in the contract. The first report is due one month from the start date of the contract.
2. Within a week of delivering each monthly report, the contractor shall be available to meet with the Project Officer if requested to do so to discuss critical aspects of the work in progress and to resolve any issues or concerns that have a bearing on the work. The contractor shall prepare a summary of these and all other meetings with the Project Officer and shall provide a copy of each summary to the Project Officer within three working days of each meeting. If a telephone conversation between the contractor and the Project Officer results in additional assignments or changes in the direction or scope of work, the conversation shall be considered a meeting and shall be documented in a meeting summary.
3. At least 10 working days before the due date for the final report referenced in item 4 below, the contractor shall submit to the Project Officer a draft copy of the final report. The Project Officer will review the draft report and inform the contractor of any errors or inaccuracies that need to be corrected in the final report.

4. The contractor shall deliver a final report to the Project Officer four months after the start date of the contract. The report is intended to assist OCPL staff in future communications planning. The report shall include recommendations the contractor has regarding the OCPL's internal organization, division of responsibilities, and functions of the office; activities that are of high value/impact and should therefore be continued; activities that are of relatively low value/impact and should therefore be eliminated or transferred to another office or organization; and new activities. The report shall address target audiences, including special audiences like members of minority groups that are underrepresented in biomedical research careers; communication products; and communication channels to use in reaching audiences with appropriate products. The report shall also address publicity approaches for NIGMS scientific initiatives. The report shall make clear which recommendations warrant the greatest attention due to the benefits that might be achieved by adopting them, which have significant organizational and resource implications, and which (if any) might be controversial. Finally, the report shall include strategies for the implementation of the described recommendations. The report shall include an executive summary.
5. Within two weeks after submitting the final report, the contractor shall conduct a briefing on the report for the Project Officer and any other NIGMS staff selected by the Project Officer. This will serve as an opportunity for the contractor to explain aspects of the report that warrant further discussion or clarification.
6. Within two weeks of the briefing for the Project Officer, the contractor will conduct up to two additional briefings on the report for NIGMS staff identified by the Project Officer, such as OCPL staff or senior NIGMS staff.

All deliverables shall be submitted to the Project Officer in both hard copy and electronic formats (e-mail messages or Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, Excel, or PowerPoint documents). Final inspection and acceptance of all work performed, reports, and other deliverables will be performed at NIGMS by the Project Officer.

The schedule above is based on the best information available at this time. Upon award, these time frames may be negotiable, with final approval made by the Project Officer.

All deliverables under this contract are the explicit property of the National Institute of General Medical Sciences and the U.S. Government.

Location of Work

Work will be performed at the contractor's site, NIGMS office facilities, and the office facilities of individuals outside NIGMS who are interviewed in person about OCPL products and services. It is acceptable for interviews with non-NIGMS staff to be held by telephone if the contractor so chooses. NIGMS will provide space in which the contractor can hold interviews with NIGMS staff. No travel outside of the Washington, DC metropolitan area will be required.

While working on the NIH campus, all contractor personnel associated with this task order must wear an NIH ID badge at all times.

Performance Period

Five months from date of award – target start date is September 16, 2002.

G. EVALUATION FACTORS

I. Technical Approach 40%

Demonstrated understanding of the task order requirements and a clear explanation of how they will be performed will be evaluated. The proposed approach will be evaluated according to the soundness, practicality, and feasibility of the written description.

II. Corporate Experience/Past Performance 30%

Demonstrated extensive experience in communications planning activities relevant to this project and demonstrated successful performance in executing a contract of this nature.

The contractor must submit a description of comparable contracts completed during the past five years and all contracts currently in progress that are similar in nature to this Statement of Work. The contractor must also provide the names of at least three references that may attest to successful performance in conducting a similar contract of this nature.

The references provided by the contractor may be contacted to assess the contractor's: (1) record of conforming to specifications and standards of good workmanship; (2) adherence to contract schedules, including administrative aspects of performance; (3) reputation for reasonable and cooperative behavior and commitment to customer satisfaction; and (4) record of controlling and forecasting costs.

The evaluation will be based on information obtained from references provided by the contractor, other relevant past performance information obtained from other sources, and any information supplied by the contractor concerning problems encountered and corrective action taken.

The Government will consider the currency and relevance of the information, source of information, context of the data, and general trends in the contractor's performance.

III. Staff 20%

The contractor shall include resumes of all proposed staff for this project that indicate relevant experience in communications planning. The Project Officer reserves the right to interview and approve staff proposed by the contractor for assignment to this task order.

IV. Cost 10%

While price is not the most important evaluation factor, costs will be considered in determining the firm that represents the best value to the Government.

Task Order #NICS-74 TITLE: NIGMS COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

PART II - CONTRACTOR'S REPLY: **CONTRACT #263-01-D-0**_____

Contractor:

Points of Contact:

Phone-

Fax-

Address:

TOTAL ESTIMATED COST:

Pricing Method: FFP

TOTAL ESTIMATED NUMBER OF HOURS:

PROPOSED COMPLETION DATE:

FOR THE CONTRACTOR: _____
Signature Date

SOURCE SELECTION:

WE HAVE REVIEWED ALL SUBMITTED PROPOSALS HAVE DETERMINED
THIS FIRM SUBMITTED THE BEST OVERALL PROPOSAL AND THE
PRICE/COST IS REASONABLE.

Billing Reference # _____

Appropriations Data: _____

RECOMMENDED: _____
FAX # Signature - Project Officer Date

APPROVED: _____
FAX # Signature - Contracting Officer Date

NIH APPROVAL -

CONTRACTOR SHALL NOT EXCEED THE TASK ORDER AMOUNT WITHOUT THE WRITTEN APPROVAL
OF THE CONTRACTING OFFICER & ICS COORDINATOR

APPROVED: _____
Signature –Anthony M. Revenis, J.D., NIH-ICS Coordinator Date